

THE
CLAIMS
OF THE
BRITISH NAVY,
SUBSEQUENT TO THE
Termination of War
WITH
FRANCE AND HER ALLIES.
BY
AN OLD POST-CAPTAIN.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR STEEL AND GODDARD, PROPRIETORS OF THE
ORIGINAL NAVY-LIST, AND CHART-SELLERS TO THE ADMI-
RALTY, &C. &C. AT THEIR NAVIGATION-WAREHOUSE, CORN-
HILL, NEAR THE ROYAL EXCHANGE; AND TO BE HAD OF THE
DIFFERENT BOOKSELLERS IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

1816.

DEDICATION.

TO THAT

Member of the House of Commons,

WHO SHALL ADVOCATE THE

Cause

OF

THE BRITISH NAVY;

OF THAT NAVY,

Whose gallantry and persevering exertions have

so often been the theme of ADMIRATION,

and the object of UNANIMOUS THANKS

IN PARLIAMENT;

To HIM,

Who shall step forward, and, upon the ACTUAL MERITS OF THE CASE, free from illiberal comparison with, or angry jealousies at, the benefits conferred on the sister-service, shall attempt to enforce the Claims of the Navy, to a fair partici-

pation of such promotion and national bounty, as a calm investigation shall show it to be entitled to;

IN FINE,

To that man, be he whom he may, who shall plainly state our unhappy case to the Legislature of our Country, free from every species of party-feeling, and with the view of obtaining its favourable award;

These pages are, by ANTICIPATION,

MOST GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED.

P R E F A C E.

IT is much to be lamented that, in discussing the **C**LAIMs of the **N**AVY, some comparison must unavoidably be made between that service and the **A**RM^Y. To do this, without the appearance of jealousy, is extremely difficult. **T**here was a time

when such feeling unhappily existed, to a considerable and illiberal extent. It is pleasing to find that, the more general diffusion of knowledge has accomplished a sincere and admiring cordiality; and the noble achievements of our brethren in arms, under the immortal WEL- LINGTON, while it has proved them what every thinking man previously believed them to be, has firmly cemented a fellow-feeling and friendship with their naval brother-labourers.

Insignificant as my humble praise

may be, it is not the less sincere and ardent. I feel that the SOLDIER is justly entitled to every thing that has been done for him; that he has honestly earned all that a grateful country can bestow. Whenever, therefore, in the following pages, the Army is alluded to; whenever a comparison is drawn between its appointments and those of the Navy; I entreat it to be borne in mind that such comparison is free from jealousy; free from every intention save that of benefiting the service of which I am a member.

“ *By their fruits shall ye know them.*”

That man who, in carrying his mind to Lisbon, and, passing hastily over the Continent to Waterloo, shall not discover, in our Army, a *host* of meritorious men, whose devoted gallantry and exertion entitles them to all that has been granted, must be parsimonious, selfish, and unjust.

On the very threshold of the argument, thus stands COMPARISON; and it stands there *unavoidably*. In

awarding to the LAND-SERVICE the meed of praise, I am bound to claim it for my NAVAL BRETHREN. But for a corresponding gallantry, on *their* part, through a *series of years*, the Army would not have had its opportunity; and, when the Navy had accomplished its work, useless would have been all its devotion, futile its every effort, without the Army to complete it.

A GREAT WORK, no less than the deliverance of Europe, of the civilized world, from the terrors, the tyranny, and overwhelming military

despotism, of the 'greatest scourge the world ever beheld, has thus been accomplished, by the united efforts of both services: and thus have *both* an equal claim to notice, to remuneration, to reward.

To those who look only to the *actual consummation*; forgetting, in the brilliancy of the last achievements, the precursors thereto; and, in the absence of better recollections, see the deliverers of Europe only in the ALLIES; one slight transition of memory, one simple volition of mind, will show them those

allies, ENGLAND ALONE EXCEPTED, crouching at the foot of Bonaparte! Is the raft at Tilsit forgotten? Where were the Allies before and after that?—In hostile array to *support* the very tyranny they subsequently united to *overthrow*. Who stood FOREMOST in that brunt? The NAVY. Who panted to second them? The ARMY. Who supported both? The COUNTRY. Of that Country BOTH have deserved well: and well will that Country act, to give to BOTH as *equal* a share of its bounties, as the difference in the respective establishments will admit.

Having myself devoted thirty-three years of my life to the Navy, of which twenty-nine have passed in *actual* and *efficient* service, I am to retire on a half-pay of £220 a year. This is the reward of my Country. SOME have made prize-money: they have so, and are personally independent. But, alas! how many HUNDREDS, (and many with wives and families,) possess ONLY their half-pay? Now, let me ask, had such passed an equal period in trade or commerce; had such exerted their mental energies and mental anxieties in commercial pur-

suits, for an equal series of years ; would not a similar reward have been deemed a poor, an unfortunate, result for so long and arduous a toil ?

Are the mental energies and mental anxieties of naval service, are self-devotion and personal safety, to meet an INFERIOR recompence ? While the merchant and tradesman, *generally speaking*, wind up their days with the means for a comfortable and luxurious old age, shall the *personal* defenders of that property pass theirs in the pinchings of *splendid poverty* ? Will the cold-hearted

calculator throw HONOUR into the scale, and say, BE CONTENT. To such I would reply, Gratifying as it is, IT IS BUT SO! “Honour,” says Falstaff, “has no skill in surgery!” Alas! how many, at this moment, feel that it neither feeds the hungry nor clothes the naked. Does the honour attached to past services always produce a pleasing recollection? No:—the sensation is sometimes grating to the feelings, and frequently adds poignancy to distress.

THE

CLAIMS OF THE NAVY.

OF the few pamphlets which have issued from the press in behalf of the Navy, or on naval subjects, some have marked their origin in *party-feeling*; some, probably, for the mere gain: of others, the writers have been tempted by their zeal; and they have suffered that zeal to betray the cause, either by introducing trifling subjects or mistated facts: thus doing injury to the service they advocate, by the hostility of party-anger, or the neglect inevitable on discovering that what are arrayed as facts bear not the test of proof.

One of these, signed “*SUUM CUIQUE*,” I have recently seen, and from it I quote the comparative number of field-officers and admirals. The author begins with what he considers a *GRIEVANCE*;—*naval commissions not being signed by the King,*

or *gazetted*. Of what moment is this to us? Will it add one iota of comfort to our situation? Will it afford the least alleviation to the sufferings of our poorest members? Yet this subject takes the *lead* in that pamphlet; and those who, having power to aid us, united with some inclination, may probably take it up for information. Influenced as we all are by *first impressions*, they will hence deem that case not very distressing, those claims not very prominent, which could find no better pioneer than this.

The public mind of the service has been for some time agitated with reports of an intended promotion; of some measure of brevet, &c.; calculated to further the interests of, and produce benefits to, its members. Let us see what are their pretensions to this.

On the 1st of January, 1815, the senior post-captain in the navy was of *twenty years* standing; being a servitude of rank corresponding with the army thus:

Three years as lieutenant-colonel;

Seventeen as colonel;

• The first three years post rank, being that of lieutenant-colonel:

Now, as, in the army, the two ranks are independent, to draw the comparison, it becomes necessary to unite them.

To the senior colonel *for promotion*, the period is *twelve* years, as follow :

Lieutenant-colonel in 1804,

Colonel in 1813 ;

Making the period of service, *now*, *twenty* years in the Navy, *twelve* in the Army.

If both have done their duty alike, why this disparity ? It arose, I believe, thus :—The army-promotion is called *brevet* ; and, although a colonel became a major-general in routine, with all the rank, pay, and appointments, when *actually* employed ; yet his half-pay was only that of the highest actual *grade* he had *bona fide* served in : his promotion to the brevet of major-general thus entailed no additional expense on the country, while the promotion of captains to be admirals, brought with it an increase of actual half-pay. This reason, (and a fair one in part,) may account for the brevet promotion being so much more rapid in the army ; or, in plain terms, may show why the senior post-captain, (the colonel of the Navy,) should serve *twenty years*, .

for that which the colonel of the Army has at *twelve years*.

Parliament, however, in its wisdom, at the suggestion of ministry, has awarded to the *army brevet* the same half-pay as to the *admirals of the navy*: thus giving to the former those actual and positive benefits, the absence of which were hitherto pleaded as reason for their speedier advancement.

Let us recur to the arguments adduced in support of this liberal, yet just, award. The substance of them was, to put generals on the same footing with admirals; and this is the absolute result. But, I will ask, has it put the colonels of the army and the post-captains of the navy (or naval colonels) on a footing; or has it given to the former a great advantage?

The relative standing of the two will be an ample reply.

The Navy does not regret this just participation of its brothers in arms: but, while the advocates of those urge the plea of putting both services, in that case, on a par,—of yielding to the Army a boon

before enjoyed *solely by the Navy*,—there can be nothing offensive or invidious in the naval advocate's urging a claim to participation in those advantages that had before been *solely* enjoyed by the land-service.

What answer can be given to this request? You have made the *generals* of the army just participators in the benefits of the *admirals*; and you urge assimilation of benefits as the reason. Now, as it seems that, the junior major-general obtained his rank after being lieutenant-colonel and colonel, (drawing my conclusion from the standing of the present senior colonel,) twelve years, on the very principle of just result, give to the post-captains of twelve years the rank of admiral. Without doing this, the plea urged becomes oppressive to one service, and unjust in its application.

I say, what answer can be given to so plain and simple a request? If it be said, we have admirals enough; this is true, to a far greater extent, with generals, as the following statement will show:

1st of January, 1815.

1 Admiral of the fleet	5 Field-m Marshals.
71 Admirals	116 Generals.

74	Vice-admirals	220	Lieut.-generals.
81	Rear-admirals	314	Major-generals.
812	Post-captains	1136 {	286 Colonels.
			850 Lieut.-colonels.
633	Commanders	1103	Majors.

INGRATITUDE is not a *new* vice, and therefore I may anticipate one of its objections to the claim of the Navy. “We have admirals enough, and, therefore, *be content*. While we wanted your services, we talked of liberality; when our coffers were in danger of French requisitions, the Navy was the theme; to keep it in good humour was policy; the danger at an end, we have no stimulus to liberality. SELF, in the first instance, told us to secure what we had; and SELF, from the same reason, now tells us to withhold.”

Such may be the feeling, and there is no doubt that it is the feeling, of some. Yet, I trust that, the preponderating majority have every disposition to do us justice. Europe has passed an unexampled twenty-five years of peril: to protect this country through it, an equally *unexampled* naval effort has been *indispensable*. The world never saw such a force afloat before. It inevitably resulted that, with this increase, a proportionable increase in the *number*

of officers, and of claimants, must occur. When the midshipman enters the service, what does he look to?—To be one day an admiral,—after passing his gradations, still panting for the goal. Primarily encouraged, by the temper of the public feeling, both in and out of parliament, to believe that every grateful desire was embarked in the cause and well-being of their defenders, with every voice loud in its praises of the Navy; is it liberal to turn short upon them now, and say, “ True, we have urged you on; have stimulated recruits; but the danger is now at an end, and we deal out the looked-for recompence with a sparing hand. Bear it in mind, that, *as the swelling of the list* of each class is the result of an *unnatural* extension of war, and of consequent *increased* naval equipment; so the claims to promotion and reward are *unusual*: cause and effect cease together; justice to servitude, in this case, will swell *a list already extensive*; but that list, no longer affected by *unusual* circumstances, must henceforth gradually subside in numbers; and, though we argue the point for twenty years, it is comprised at last in this.”——

Is the promotion I advocate the fair honest due of the service? Is it that reward which has been tacitly held out to us?

My remarks have hitherto been confined to my own rank: the assimilating the two services, so far as they are capable of it, is no less desirable in the other classes. Many are the arguments used by either profession, and enlarged on by their respective supporters. Where so great a fundamental difference marks the very condition of the two services, all that we can hope, is, to apportion the rewards, whether of promotion, or pay, &c. as equitably as circumstances admit. While the army urge *purchase*, the navy plead *servitude*: the officers of the latter *would gladly purchase if they could*. The ensign, in the army, often *has tried* other professions; he commences his military one at a later period than a midshipman; and *at once* has *rank, half-pay*, and respectability: if either his own caprice, or peace, or other circumstances, place him on half-pay, he has, not unfrequently, the *rudiments* of a profession to turn to, for an amelioration of his situation.

Let us, with this, compare the condition of the midshipman. Obligated to embark at an earlier age, before the rudiments of knowledge can be attained, without rank, half-pay, or comfort; and with no *certainty of ever having* any; the query, too, whether the sums expended in his support, while a

midshipman, are not equal to the first purchase of a commission ; what is his situation on being dismissed ;—to what can *he* turn ?

I mean not to attempt further comparison in the other ranks : those I have made are not invidious ; and, I trust that, I have guarded against the imputation of such feeling in my preface.

In the army, a man, once a field-officer, progressively rises to the rank of general, unless actual misconduct bar it. He is thus exempt from the *degrading*, the *heart-rending*, feeling to which the officers of the navy are subject :—*that of being passed over*, on coming to their turn for a flag, and placed on a superannuated list, either as captains, with *captain's half-pay*, or as rear-(*offensively called yellow*) admirals,—with rear-admiral's half-pay. The number, *at this moment*, on the first list is thirty-six ; on the latter, twenty-nine. The difference of half-pay, or expense to the country, supposing that, instead of this degradation, *all* had had their birth-right promotion, after deducting those captains who hold civil employments, would have been as follows :—

8	would have been admirals.	<i>Difference, £2528</i>
10	vice-admirals,	1400
11	still be rear-admirals.	<i>No difference.</i>
15	captains ought to be rear-do.	<i>Difference, 3250</i>
Total, per annum		- <u>£7178</u>

For seven thousand one hundred and seventy-eight pounds!!!

For this miserable saving are forty-three officers living under the sting of wounded feelings. The calculation can be made by any body as well as myself.

Among the officers thus placed in a purgatory here, grated with the sneer of every puppy, pointed at as, *only a yellow-admiral*, stand the names of MONKTON and PEARD. Why have these been passed over? Have the services of Monkton, as first-lieutenant of the Marlborough, in the action of the 1st of June, entitled him to be degraded, who fought that ship when his captain was wounded? Who that saw her on that day, reduced to a wreck, *not a stick standing*, could have anticipated her gallant first-lieutenant, living, to be passed over; to be denied that boon, the hope, the solace, of many a toilsome

year: and, I will add, the RIGHT of a long and faithful servitude.

Name we PEARD: ask the first naval officer you meet; enquire of each subsequent one; they shall, *to a man*, tell you that the service hail him as a *valuable*, a *meritorious*, officer. Trace his services, his gallantry. Ask Lord St. Vincent; no bad testimony. Apply to the *records of the Admiralty*; view his conduct in quelling the mutiny in his ship, the St. George; see this marked by the promotion of his first-lieutenant, now captain, Hatley. See him in command of the Audacious, in both Sir James Saumarez's actions, in the Gut of Gibraltar*: and then ask, what has he done to have his feelings racked by being *only* a yellow admiral?

I may be told that they did not serve in the last war. Perhaps they had not INTEREST to get employed. But suppose (for I do not know the fact) they preferred sea-fencible service, or their health, or private circumstances, induced their remaining on shore; so have the officers of the army done, on similar occasions. It would be invidious to *name* them; but, how many generals now, who have the

* Schomberg's Naval Chronology.

rank, and are eligible to be employed, who have retired, in like manner, from active service, as colonels, &c.; yet, on their turn coming, they have gained their promotion; and so they ought. Here, too, we claim to be placed on a par with the army.

Peard, I know, had the sea-fencibles; so had a *late admiral*. Aye, and that very appointment was the plea, *the admitted plea*, for his claim to his flag. He had no other service to present, as a post-captain, except his *first* appointment. Admiral F—— gained it by sea-fencible service: Peard is said to have *lost it by the same service*. Though an old post-captain, I am ignorant what does exclude; nor do I, on inquiry, find that my brother-officers know. Thus we are at the beck of the existing admiralty, whose decrees, on these occasions, are varied: yet they are not, when altered, promulgated to those they affect. All that we know is, they assign their reasons when the exclusion has taken place; when the man is passed over. I know that they have cloaked themselves under the weak observation—“*The promotion is from the REGENT in council.*” The King can do no wrong. In the case of exclusion, *who advises it?* Next to the boon of every man’s (save for actual misconduct,)

having his flag in turn, I would at least claim *some actual, some defined, cause of exclusion.*

Captain Frederick Watkins, now a superannuated or *yellow* admiral, was first-lieutenant of the *Blanche*, with the heroic Faulknor, at the capture of the *Pique*. When that hero was killed, Mr. Watkins finished his work by her capture. Subsequently, as captain of the *Majestic*, a breach of military discipline towards the late Admiral Wells, at Sheerness, subjected him to a court-martial, and he was sentenced *to be dismissed from the command of his ship*. So far as the navy have been informed, this sentence was the plea for his being passed over. An admiral, who, in former days, in a moment of irritation, committed a breach of military discipline towards his *inferior*, was, by a court-martial, *dismissed his Majesty's service*. The two courts drawing the distinction of *minor* offence, on the part of Captain Watkins; yet the severer sentence did not operate against the former. He obtained his flag; has subsequently received honours; I have that of being somewhat known to the admiral in question, and believe, in my conscience, the king has not a better officer; one more acquainted with the service; or, to use a naval expression, who has it more "at his fingers' ends." Nor should I

have noticed this, but to shew the miserable *fluctuating* state of all our prospects, when a toilsome, a laborious, and a dangerous, period of years shall have placed us at the top of the list. For even a change of Admiralty, just before a promotion takes place, may alter our case, by a *new* motive of exclusion.

Vice-admiral Sir E. Harvey's case is so recent, I need only add that, the breach of discipline he committed was towards his *superior*; thus similar to Captain Watkins'. The court, however, deemed it more offensive, inasmuch as they dismissed the admiral *the service*; Watkins only *the command of his ship*.

The gallantry, the services, of Sir Eliab, in the never-to-be-forgotten battle of Trafalgar, opposed the operation of his sentence to exclusion, and he has since received the honor of Knight-commander of the Bath; having been previously reinstated in his rank. Thus, in both these cases, the sentence of the courts-martial, though marking a higher portion of error than in the case of Captain Watkins, did not operate, either in *promotion* or *honors*, against them. Why was not the *milder* sentence on Captain Watkins, in like manner, forgotten in the

recollection of his gallantry in the *Blanche*, capture of Curaçoa, &c.

If I am correctly informed, and I believe that I am, the only thing in the army which stops promotion to a general, is, the exchanging to half-pay, and *receiving the difference* ; or, from actual misconduct. I repeat that I *believe* that I am correct in this ; at all events, their *cause of exclusion is defined* ; it is known to every ensign in the army. Ours is not even known to those on the eve of suffering from it.

On the subject of the WIDOWS' PENSIONS, another distressing and oppressive difference exists between the two services. The pension to the widow of a post-captain of three years' standing, (rank of *colonel* in the army,) is *ninety pounds a year*. To obtain this, she must, at each period of payment, make affidavit that she has not, in any way, an income of *double* that, or £180 a year. In the army, the affidavit is, that she does not receive or enjoy any *other pension, &c. from Government*. No mention of her income. So that, in the Navy, though my widow should have only £180 a year, with a house full of children, she would be EXCLUDED FROM HER PENSION. In the army, the widow, though her income should be *indefinite*,

and no child, could, if she chose, receive hers. This becomes peculiarly hard, in many cases ; I will select one. *I personally know* a captain, who, on his marriage, made a *settlement* on his wife of £200 a year ; say, the half of their joint-fortunes. This will exclude her from the pension. Misfortunes have assailed that officer,—overwhelmed with a family of eight children, and the loss of all his property, *save this settlement*. The widow and children will thus be robbed of the aid of this pittance of ninety pounds a-year. Let it, also, be borne in mind, that, our widows have more than a *claim*, they have a RIGHT, to this pension, and that *not as a gift*. The funds whence these pensions are paid arise from OURSELVES, *not from the bounty of the country*. From every officer in the naval service, a deduction of 3*d.* in the pound, both from his *full* and *half-pay*, is made ; and this deduction is the fund whence these pensions are paid. Thus, from my half-pay, is annually deducted £2. 17*s.*

The measure, at all events, adopted towards the Army, is liberal. Then why less liberality towards the Navy ?

The Army receives its pay *monthly*, and, *I believe*, in advance. When serving abroad, the dol-

lar is paid at 4*s.* 6*d.*, *no matter what the rate of exchange*; Government lose the difference, not the officer. What was the state of the Navy in the Mediterranean during the late war? No such allowance being made to them, being permitted only to draw their pay *every three months*, and then for *elapsed* time, they were receiving the dollar for these bills on the Navy-Office at 6*s.* and up to 6*s.* 4*d.*; thus getting, for the pound *sterling*, about fourteen shillings only.

I believe I am also correct in stating that, when an officer in the army receives a wound, whenever his pension is granted him, it *commences from the period at which he was wounded*. In the Navy, should such officer be absent abroad, or unable to exhibit himself at Surgeons'-Hall, even for two years, his pension has no similar retrospect; it begins only on the day it is *bona fide* granted.—Why this difference?

In noticing the arrangement, made in 1805, respecting the deduction of 5 per cent. from all prize-money of the Navy, to be applied to the funds of Greenwich Hospital; I mean not to discuss its propriety. The wisdom of the parliament, which passed the act, saw that it was right, and I

bow to its decrees. I notice it only to show how *progressively* the usual and *long-established* gains of the Navy have been reduced, and *reduced without an equivalent*. In 1808, by an order in council, his Majesty was pleased to make a further deduction, *and a very considerable one*, from the prize-money of the *admirals* and *captains*. By that order, a *new mode* of distribution was established: and thus ONE-THIRD was taken from the admirals and captains, and given to the midshipmen, petty officers, seamen, &c. With this act I have no disposition to cavil, whatever my private opinion may be on the occasion. I judge that it was found right, and I bow, with submission, to that decision. The *fact* is all that is requisite for my present purpose; more particularly as these things are not known, or taken into consideration, in the discussion of naval claims.

Thus, then, it appears that, since 1805, 5 per cent. has been taken from our prize-money; and, since 1808, an *additional one-third from the admirals and captains*. So that where, in 1804, I should have received £100 for a prize, since 1808 I should, *for the same prize*, have received only £63—a difference of *thirty-seven per cent.!!!*

I repeat that I do not bring these cases forward as grievances; the measures might or might not be good: I state them as matter of fact, and produce them as matter of argument.

When government, in its wisdom, was pleased to decide that fees of office should be abolished, it called on the officers and persons receiving them, in all the public offices, the dock-yards, &c., to give in the amount of their fees, for the three preceding years; and, on that data, the legislature abolished *their* taking fees, which have since been received by government, and applied as a fund for the payment of those persons. But they, in *justice*, would not rob the individuals of their *long accustomed perquisites*; *perquisites that were known*, and doubtless taken into consideration, in arranging the salaries of those who received them. They even gave an *increase of salary* adequate to something more than the average of fees taken in the three preceding years.

An alteration took place, I believe, in the manner of clothing the army, which reduced the colonel's emoluments: The alteration was good for the soldier and the country. An equivalent was, however,

found for the colonel. I repeat thàt, *I believe* this to be the case.

Great care was taken, at the union with Ireland, that places which were abolished, in consequence, should not operate to the prejudice of those who held them. The salaries, &c., were granted, wholly or in part, according to the servitude. At least, so I understand. Nay, I am told that patent places abolished thereby, which are supposed to give a *right*, were purchased by government of the holders.

I am not finding fault with these measures, nor *invidiously* bringing them forward; but I cannot forget them, while asserting that, the *thirty-seven per cent.* they have taken from the prize-money of admirals and captains, was taking that from them to which they had been entitled by a series of orders in council, or gift of the crown, for *centuries*. The emolument was casual; but the chance of it, indubitably, had its influence in the modus of pay established, or influenced a considerative recollection when that pay was decided on. I ask, that, when our emoluments were thus taken away, how happened it that no one recompence was given in the

lieu? The wisdom of the measure might be as certain as the abolition of fees, or the union with Ireland: with that I have nothing to do. But I may again ask, why, if it was done, were we, *and we only*, denied recompence?

Is it because the military obedience, that we have been educated in, repressed our murmurs; or is it because, as Lord Sandwich too justly observed, “we were a rope of sand,” and no union exists, among the corps at large, on such points; or, that we have *no friend at court*, no leading man of influence, to plead our cause.—A prophetic warning voice cannot be offensive.

“*Tread on a worm, and it will turn.*”

Connected with the foregoing is the subject of the DROITS of ADMIRALTY. I could probably show how, during the late war, these *droits* have been generally less productive to the Navy than formerly; but, as the *strongest* case, I shall select the American *droits* only.

DROITS have usually been made thus: when hostilities were likely to arise, this country, instead of waiting till the shipping of the country in question

were safe in port, have usually seized them as a deposit; to be restored if war did not follow; to become droits, if it did. This is the case of droits arising from precaution; and, such were the Danish, the Prussian, &c. Can the Americans be excepted? Yes; in this case, America, an independent government, *declared war against this country*, in June, 1812, and proceeded to carry it into effect. She engaged and captured his Majesty's ship the Guerrier. Here was *actual war*. This was known to our government at the end of July, and war, *bona fide* war, immediately ensued. Yet, from the expectation that the repeal of the orders in council, relative to blockade, on being known in America, would terminate hostilities, it was not until the middle of October,* that what is called a declaration of war took place, by granting letters of marque, &c. All the captures made previously to that time, in October, were declared DROITS, although we were actually at war; although every one of these vessels was captured during that state of warfare; and although our temporizing *ended in its continuation!*

Will it be too much to say that, the condemnation of these captures, as DROITS, was *taking from the*

* The dates above are given from memory.

Navy its just dues. That it was an unhandsome extension of the Admiralty or regal claim; and was, as I believe, unprecedented; for I cannot find any similar case in point.

It may be said, and justly too, that all right of prize vests in the crown, the Navy having no *right* therein, but by grant from the crown, at the commencement of a war. Yet this, like many other circumstances, has become every thing, *short of right*, from *long, very long*, custom and practice; and it will not be contested that this emolument has entered into the view of all who have thought on our case, our pay, &c., as a *part of our wages*, and certainly has been urged in topics of *comparison* with the army.

It appears then, that, as the *increasing price of every thing went on*, so far as relates to admirals and captains, the accustomed emoluments have been *decreasing*. No addition, whatever, to the *full-pay* having been made, and the *late* augmentation of *half-pay* having no retrospection to the *thirty-seven per cent. taken from our prize-money*, these losses by *droits* is inadequate; while the army augmentation, wherein there are no such *deductions* to complain of, bore an *exact* ratio; and, in some

cases, the *relative ranks* appear to have been disturbed, not advantageously to the naval service.

I repeat, therefore, that we have not been treated like other departments. Our advantages have been reduced without an equivalent; for nothing has been given in lieu of that which we have lost.

By way of illustrating American droits, I will mention the case of one captured by his majesty's ship Leonidas. Her name, the Catherine, from Archangel. This ship, captured at the end of July, 1812, was not brought to sale *till May*, 1813! Her value, when captured, *about* £23,000, yielded, when sold, owing to this delay, and to the retreat of the French from Moscow, about £16,000. And this, when *sifted*, paid into the treasury something about £11,100. Paradoxical as it may appear, to those capable of common arithmetic, this prize yielded to the captors about £1,100 LESS than if she had netted £1,200 *less* than she did! that is to say, if she had *netted* and paid into the Treasury *instead* of £11,100, *only* £9,999, the captors would have received to their share, £1,100 MORE. And why? the Treasury, it seems, had made what is called a *minute*, that, for all DROITS netting *under* £10,000, the captors should have TWO-THIRDS;

all above that sum, ONE-HALF. Unfortunately for the captors, their prize *injured* them *by its value*, and produced the novelty of the *larger prize* giving the *less* prize-money.

To a memorial made on the occasion, the Treasury replied, “it was an arrangement made *to benefit the Navy*, and could not be altered.” I own that my powers of reasoning are incapable of comprehending *this benefit*: nor does it seem that the captors, who sustained this *loss* of £1,100 *among them*, had ever sense enough, or could be made, to understand it.

To the officers of the Army has been given the boon, certainly a very just one, that, in the event of the loss of their baggage, a stated remuneration should be made to them, according to their rank. This is, I believe, the case even down to the loss of their watches. Why should not the Navy have a similar compensation for losses in service? Can any one assign a *sound* reason why the colonel of a regiment should be paid for his loss of baggage, and the captain of a man of war should have nothing for an equal loss. The risk, *from necessity*, in point of amount, is far greater in the *latter case*; because a far greater proportion of clothes, &c., is

required, as the owner is not always able to get them washed or recruited at will ; and the stock of wine and stores must, also, be necessarily greater.

Having hastily gone over some of the evils of which the Navy complain ; having, I trust, free from intemperance or irritable feeling, plainly and candidly shewn wherein a portion of them exists ; I will trespass a little farther, in order to point out what appears to me to be the causes of their continuation.

Firstly, To the situation of *premier* lord being *removable* with every ministry ; and, often, in consequence of different arrangements in the *same* ministry. No first lord can, therefore, look to *that certainty* of remaining in his office long enough to mature any plan that he may contemplate ; nor does he, from this uncertainty, become *identified* with the service. He views his situation as a *cabinet minister* ; not as the FATHER, the FRIEND, the PATRON, of the service. The present first lord is said to hold the memory of his father in high regard. That father, was, indeed, our friend. Ameliorating the condition of the Navy, and advancing its interests, ~~were~~ his favourite objects.

Whether departed souls are permitted to interest themselves in the affairs of this world, I know not: but, if they are, I am sure the *spirit* of the late Lord Melville must be hovering around its former residence at the Admiralty, with unusual anxiety for the conduct of the son. May this spirit infuse into that son the same ardent zeal, in our cause, which itself possessed. May the exertions of the son complete what the father *projected*, and the Navy have to own its obligations to both!

LOOK TO THE ARMY.—His Royal Highness the Duke of York a *figure*.—Here it has not merely a FRIEND and PATRON, but a *permanent* and a *real* one; and *not a cabinet-minister*. He is identified with the service; feels that interest about it which *nothing but permanency* can give; and has had the satisfaction he looked for, in its present state, and the consequent thanks of parliament.

It is, also, a lamentable truth, that, of the naval men who have occasionally held seats in the House of Commons, few can be named who have, in that character, attempted aught for the benefit of the service. From this censure we may except ONE, who is yet living, in addition to the late Admiral Macbride, an active and persevering friend to his

own profession. To what cause this apathy is to be ascribed, I leave others to decide. My memory does not enable me to name *one benefit* originating in, or derived from, the exertions of a naval member. On the contrary, I think they were nearly all against us relative to the privilege of appointing our own proctors: as, also, when the question was agitated as to the great loss the Navy suffered from the ruinous rate of exchange, during the war, in the Mediterranean, when it was proposed to put us, in this case, on a par with the Army.

The Army, too, have now a WELLINGTON, and have always had a *somebody*, to plead their case at head-quarters; who, entering into the common cause of the profession, have put SELF out of the question; and, recollecting his or their own progress upwards, have advocated for the service in general.

Should these pages meet the eye of LORD KEITH, may I be permitted to hope that he will seize the advantage which his situation affords, and become our solicitor. Long has his lordship held a place in the household of the PRINCE REGENT, and he is, moreover, understood to be his personal friend. In possession of wealth, of honours, professional rank, and *all* he can require, SELF must here be

out of the question. Lord Keith has nothing to ask, nothing to gain. Thus independent, what an enviable opportunity presents itself to him, of acquiring the gratitude of his brother-officers, of the Navy in general, by standing forward in their behalf. His lordship knows the facts, and I will not believe that a fair and temperate exposition of them to the Prince Regent would be unavailing.

An opinion, it is true, prevails pretty generally, that the Navy are not in favour with the Regent; and expressions, *said* to have been uttered by his Royal Highness, are handed about, indicative of such feeling. I would willingly believe that, when his Royal Highness allows his memory its influence, he must feel that he owes the security of his realms, *in the first place*, to the NAVY. As it is one of the attendant circumstances of his rank and station to be misrepresented, we will hope that he has been so in this case. It would be unhandsome, nay, illiberal, not to allow him some prepossessions in favour of the Army. It is his *own* profession; he has an intimate knowledge of it; and has identified himself with it all his life. I am anxious to believe that no other than this *unavoidable* preference exists.

I omitted to notice earlier, the difference relative to the affidavits, made by the officers of the Navy, and those of the Army, to enable them to receive their HALF-PAY. The Navy swear, “ that they have not enjoyed the benefit of any public employment, under Government, &c.” for the period the half-pay is claimed for. This excludes them from holding any office and receiving their half-pay also. The Army make no such affidavit; and are, therefore, not excluded.

From 1793, when the war broke out, to 1808, a period of fifteen years, no opportunity offering to the Army for the developement of its zeal and energies, it might be fairly called a naval war. The actions of the 1st of June, 14th of February, 11th of October, the Nile and Trafalgar, &c. &c., were passed over, without leading to any *permanent* benefit awarded to the Navy. Yet, when the Army was illumined with the brilliancy of its later achievements, these led to *its permanent benefit*; and thus the Navy may owe to the Army at least one melioration.

The great naval actions left the wounded officer where they found him, with the pension of the rank

he held when wounded. To the Army was given the boon of the pension *increasing as the rank advanced*; and to us it was *afterwards given, because they previously had it.*

The chain of naval victories *were, in their day,* of import as high, perhaps, as that of Waterloo. But for that of the Nile, our Indian possessions might have been doubtful: yet what was done for those in *that, or any of these actions?*—SOME PARTIAL PROMOTION.

In WATERLOO, from the *highest* to the *lowest*, the private, the drummer, have *personally* received benefit. The latter of two years gratuitous servitude.

LET ME CONCLUDE WITH AN APPEAL TO THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED PARLIAMENT.

Believing, as I do most sincerely, that all I have stated is capable of the simplest proof, I would call on some independent member to acquire that honour which must necessarily result from standing forward as the VOLUNTARY CHAMPION OF THE NAVY. To such I would say, Try my assertion—

by the touchstone of Truth;—if they are found correct, they are a HOST : if not so, I relinquish all claim to support. A good cause requires no violence ; and Truth is invincible as she is immortal.

The Navy wishes not to become the object of party-contest. Its desire is, to stand or fall on the merits of its case.

That advocate who shall so take up its cause, who shall try it by those intrinsic merits, free from, and unconnected with, *any* other topic ; who shall *calmly* and *mildly* bring it before parliament ; will be entitled to the lasting gratitude of the whole service.

Our positions are simple ; they are easily proved, or confuted. They plead with a thousand tongues.

The following papers, moved for in parliament, would, at once, prove the solidity of the preceding assertions.

1st. The period of service of the senior post-captain in the navy, and of the senior colonel *for promotion*, as lieutenant-colonel and colonel.

- 2d. The affidavits taken by the officers' widows, in both services.
- 3d. List of officers at present superannuated, as rear-admirals and as captains; distinguishing such of the latter as hold civil situations.
- 4th. Any rule or regulation relative to what does entitle or exclude a post-captain from his flag.
- 5th. Copy of the order in council relative to the alteration of the mode of distribution of prize-money, issued in 1808, pointing out the difference. N.B. The 5 per cent. to Greenwich was given by an act of parliament.
- 6th. Return of the allowances made to officers, both in the army and navy, for the loss incurred by the rate of exchange abroad, for their pay.
- 7th. A return, showing at what time the pension commences in the army, for wounds, and, also, in the navy.
- 8th. Copies of affidavits made by officers, in both services, for their half-pay.

9th. The allowance made to officers, in *both* services, for loss of baggage.

10th. Return of to what day captured Americans were made droits.

11th. Copies of memorial and correspondence, between the captain of his Majesty's ship Leonidas and the Treasury, in the case of the Catherine, American ship, from Archangel, taken by that ship, in July, 1812 ; together with her nett proceeds, paid into the Treasury, and the sum granted therefrom to the captors.

These will, we believe, amply prove the *essence* of our observations. Where we have spoken doubtfully, we shall probably be found correct in *substance*.

The writer is not aware that any expression has escaped from him which can give pain to an individual. Should there be one that has had that effect ; or, above all, that can be construed into hostility to the Army ; he begs for the kindness of believing, that nothing could be farther from his intentions.

His object has been, honestly to plead the cause of his own service ; and he has ventured to offer no other remarks, in that cause, than such as are unavoidably, necessarily, and essentially, connected with it. May they be propitious !

THE END.

